

Hall Trees / Cherry

Leaves 2/29

May 10 1892

17 2017 005 34518



# Curios and Relics

## Furniture

### Hall Tree/Chair

### Springfield Home

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



# Lincoln Chair And Hall Tree May Be Returned To Home

By WILLIAM DODD CHENERY. ♦ in Jacksonville of Bateman, es-

After nearly eighty years exile from their original home, two valuable and artistic pieces of antique furniture are apparently likely to be restored to their unique abiding place of the long ago—the hallway of the Abraham Lincoln homestead on Eighth street.

The pieces are a walnut hall tree for hats and umbrellas, and its matching hall chair, with the formal straight back of that period, both undoubtedly selected and purchased by Mrs. Lincoln when they bought the house from Rev. Charles Dresser, rector of the Episcopal church, who had performed their wedding ceremony. For the place they paid \$1,500, of which \$1,200 was in cash, and the other \$300 by conveyance of a lot in the business part of the town.

They moved into the home on May 2, 1844, living there until Thursday, Feb. 7, 1861, when they removed to the Chenery house, northeast corner of Fourth and Washington streets, to enable them to have a sale of their furniture before going to the white house in Washington.

The preceding night a "levee" was held in the homestead, attended by thousands of people from far distant as well as local points. A printed report states: "The first levee given by the president-elect, in his own home last night, was a grand outpouring of citizens, led by the members of the legislature. It lasted from 7 to 12 o'clock, Mr. Lincoln receiving the guests as they arrived, passing them on to Mrs. Lincoln, who stood in the center of the parlor, gracefully and admirably greeting all. Mrs. Lincoln is a lady of fine figure and accomplished address, and will grace and do honor to the white house."

Among the most esteemed friends of Lincoln was the Hon. Newton Bateman, elected as state superintendent of public instruction in 1858, on the same ticket that saw the defeat of Lincoln for congress by Douglas. He was re-elected in 1860, when Lincoln was victor over Douglas for the presidency. Bateman had his office in the old state house (present courthouse), and having high regard for his literary ability, Lincoln showed him his draught of his first inaugural speech. Bateman found but one slight correction to offer, regarding a split infinitive.

The father of this writer, John W. Chenery, had been a classmate

in Jacksonville of Bateman, establishing a friendship that lasted throughout their lives. He told me that during a conversation in the office of the hotel he heard Mr. Bateman say to Lincoln: "I want to buy some piece of furniture as a memento from your home." Mr. Lincoln replied: "I want you to have first choice. Come with me and select what you want, before there is any sale to the public."

On Washington's birthday of this year, Feb. 22, 1939, a letter was written to me by the granddaughter of Newton Bateman, Mary Wright (Mrs. L. B.) Wheeler, of Denver, Colo., stating that she was writing to me because she was aware of the friendship of her grandfather and my father, and that I was acquainted with the circumstances under which Mr. Bateman had acquired the two pieces of furniture. They had remained in the family uninterruptedly since Feb., 1861, passing from her grandfather to her mother, Sarah Bateman Wright, and then to herself. With the anniversaries recently of Lincoln and Washington she felt impelled to donate these pieces to the state of Illinois, provided they be placed in their original home.

The writer immediately consulted Charles P. Casey, assistant director of the department of public works and buildings, which has custody of the Lincoln homestead. Needless to record Mr. Casey was exceedingly rejoiced at even the prospect of the restoration to the home of these rare relics of the Emancipator and his devoted wife, Mary Todd Lincoln.

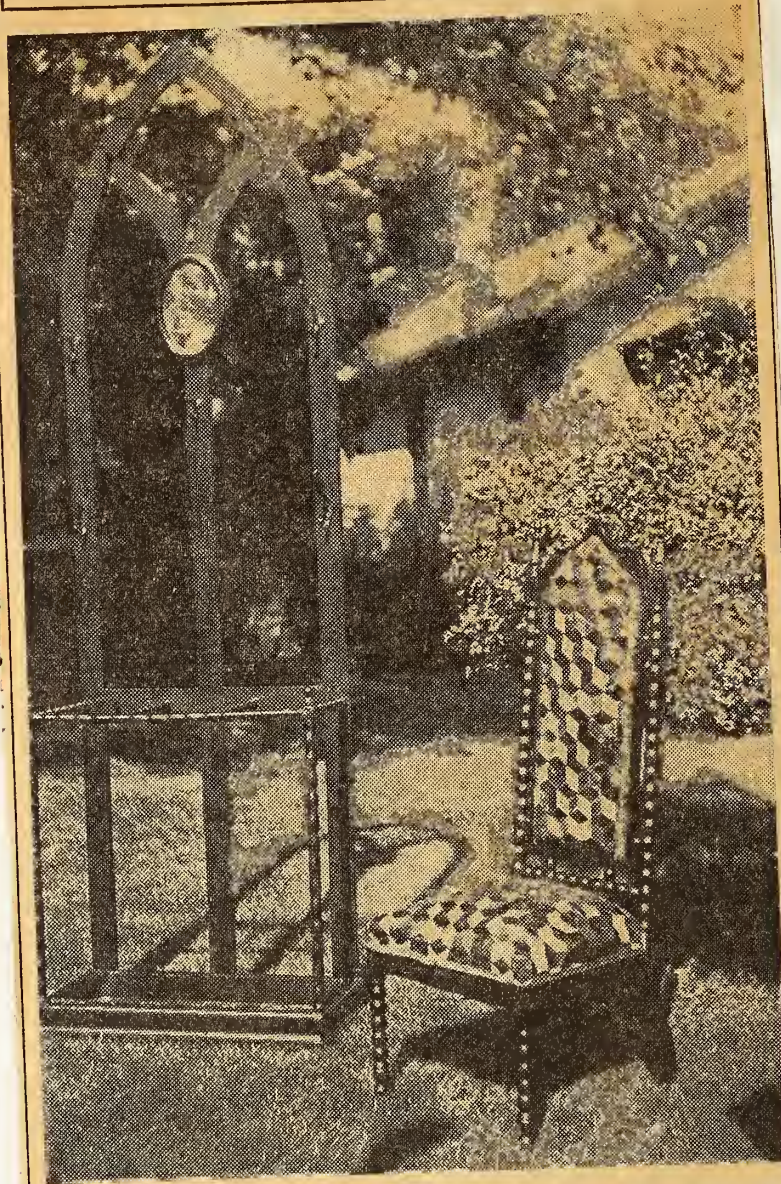
Consulting the Hon. Francis G. Blair, for many years a successor in office of Mr. Bateman, he remarked: "I know Mrs. Wheeler very well indeed, and any statement she may make is as dependable as the 'law of Moses.'" At the request of Mr. Casey, Mrs. Wheeler's letter received immediate and hopeful reply.

Mr. Bateman served fourteen years in the office of state superintendent, living in a house then standing on the northwest corner of Spring and Edwards streets.



8) HILL CHAIR

## May Again Grace Lincoln Home



The chair and halltree, shown above, which once stood in the hallway of the Lincoln homestead may be returned to their original location by Mrs. L. B. Wheeler of Denver, Colo., whose grandfather purchased the pieces from Lincoln.

JOURNAL, SPRINGFIELD, ILL., SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 1939



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2013

[http://archive.org/details/curiosrelicsfurnlinc\\_64](http://archive.org/details/curiosrelicsfurnlinc_64)

